FOR ALL THE STATES

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FRANCIS B. SAYRE, JR.

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PREFACE

WEEK BY WEEK at Washington Cathedral prayers are offered for the several states. Fifty of them, together with one for the District of Columbia and one for the nation, take up the Sundays of the year, adorning the worship of the national church with intercession appropriate to the American people. The sequence of remembrance is historical, following the order of each state's admission to the Union.

Recently, over a period of two years, fresh prayers were written for the Cathedral's use. These are now collected in this little volume, hoping there may be many whose prayer, coinciding with ours, will find these words useful.

The prayers are of course meant to be read aloud. Try it! The cadence is for the voice, not only in churches, but in families and at a variety of public occasions when an invocation may be wanted or a holiday is to be celebrated. In fact it is with such circumstances in mind that I have deliberately gathered all specifically Christian references at the end of each prayer. America belongs to others beside Christians only, who may cheerfully use these petitions by simply omitting the final ascription, and just ending with an hon-

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est Amen of their own. Please God that in praying we might be united, rather than divided!

I have left out the footnotes that might have been. For in a number of instances there are quiet references to bits of history or geography that may escape casual attention. For example, not everyone may know that the first settlers to arrive on the coast of Maryland crossed the sea in two little vessels named *Ark* and *Dove.* You will find the latter embedded in the prayer for Maryland, and many more such allusions in the other prayers.

But I prefer to let the children find these out, if parents will but lend them this little book. And in doing so, it is my hope that they may discover the deep and steady Spirit which from the beginning has presided over this country of ours, so rich in loveliness and history, yet so easily defiled by man's irreverent hand.

Francis B. Sayre, Jr.

DEAN

WASHINGTON CATHEDRAL
1972

A PRAYER FOR
THE NATION

BLESS, Lord, the bright land Thou
hast lifted between the seas;
Her lonely wilds,
Her gentle earth 'neath man's
taming hand;
And the striving cities builded
there.

BLESS the fairness of her freedom
in battle defended,
by law enshrined;
Mark of Thy love on every human
brow.

BLESS, O God, our country:
In the teeming gifts her people
bring,
And the vision that unites them
all,
Until upon this continent Thy
truth be purified, Thy glory
become our crown;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
ALABAMA

TIMELESS roll the streams while man moulds their course and wrests his sufficient margin of life from Thy scattered benefice;

Shapes the flint to arrow point;
nurses seed to cotton, bale and
cloth;
carves the wood to cabin logs
and bakes his cities from
the clay;
mines the ore and makes the
steel;
catches the surging flood upon
his shining wheels and
makes the river yield light
and power for Thy people all.

Praise Thee, wondrous God, for the blessed watershed that is Alabama, pliant to man's need, gracious to his questing spirit. May her sons not forget Thy bounty, nor fail to deserve Thy benediction;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
ALASKA

BLESS, Lord, the land that Thou hast spread to the North; the necklace of isles in the cold sea; mountains and tundra and great rivers, and the valleys where Thy people dwell.

As Thou dost light shining Borealis across the dark heavens of night, so may Thy glory adorn the day, that those who behold Thy splendour may lift their lives to Thee, and ever know the liveliness of Thy wondrous grace,

through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
ARIZONA

O GOD, who hast hid such plentiful treasure in the age-hewn soil of Arizona, and etched the timeless calendar of Thy patience upon her rocks and canyons, liberate now Thy blessing to all who live within the shadow of her grandeur.

Consecrate, O Lord, the phoenix birth of seed from dry suspense,

rain to the yellow flowers,
the fleece of sheep for
an Indian's loom,
and the bread of life
to Thy needful people.

By the crowning of the dawn refresh their spirit; in the brightness of the day and the cool of the night let all in peace come to the rising of Thy light;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
ARKANSAS

MID all the wonder of Thy glory, O God, we thank Thee most for the familiar places where Thou dost come to meet our lowly love and our unspoken hope.

Blessed be the quiet hallows where Thy people have found peace, and the steeples they have built to crown the circle of their friendship in Thy Word. Bless their homes along the rivers Red and White and muddy brown; deck their lives with the homely comfort of humor, with proportion, and the silent pride of valiant struggle.

So may the common web of life in Arkansas be ennobled by that holiness and help which is Thine alone to give, and our grateful destiny to reflect;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
CALIFORNIA

Golden gate,
Golden state,
Who posts the watch on Farallon's isle?
Who lifts up Shasta's snowy crown
and keeps the high passes
of Sierra Nevada?

'Tis Thee, O Lord, who hath ringed a
royal valley with such ramparts:
That within, blessing may lie among
the palms and poppies, the orchards
and vineyards and man-made
waterways.

Praise the good monks in their missions;
Drake in his ship; pioneers
and settlers;
all who sought life in Thy Name
from Tahoe's emerald blue to the surf
dancing upon the breathless coast.

Hallow, O Father, our questing too; that
we may behold the beauty of Thy truth;
far off among the stars and close
in the charters we devise
that peace and friendship may endure
upon the lovely face of earth;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
COLORADO

BLESS, high and holy Lord, the people who live under the eaves of our continent.

Bless the rocky peaks of their golden roof-land, which pluck crystal snow from heaven to refresh the earth on every side with water pure.

Guard, O God, the mountain passes, the spruce and lovely aspen sentinels upon their crests; protect the lowly sheep and patient cattle in their verdant valleys; prosper the seed by man's labor planted.

So, loving Father, do Thou keep Thy Colorado children in the beauty of their lofty clime, and the joy of their unspoiled hope;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
CONNECTICUT

HAVE in Thy keeping, O God, the strong hills and homely rocks of Connecticut, and the undaunted folk who live among them. As by mighty glacier Thou didst shape and furnish the land, so by grace and labor did Thy servants clear it, meting the bounds with boulders, and measuring themselves against the stern beauty of Thy handiwork. Thus moulded to Thy majesty, may Thy people ever rejoice in the bounty of their valleys, the refreshment of the sea, and Thy changing glory at each season of the year. Bless their towns and government; bless their commerce; bless their rest; that in their turn they may endow their progeny with that hard and humble hope which is ever learned of Thee;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
DELAWARE

BLESS, Lord, the peaceable homes and steady lives which from early times have looked to a wide and quiet river to be their highway and their harbor. As the estuary opens to the sea, so may the hope of Thy people be borne to the wideness of Thy glory and Delaware be ever sanctified: Lovely among her fields of green; first to wear the Constitution of American freedom; alert to the needs of all, and in all things faithful;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

SANCTIFY anew, Thou Ruler of Destiny, this bit of Federal soil which our forefathers set apart from any State to nourish the high mission of our common government. Bless, O Lord, the precious branches planted here:

The deep-rooted responsibility
of Law,
the even measure of Justice,
and the leadership fitly chosen and
held aloft before our people.

Grant to all who serve in this District the same vision that drew Columbus to a new world, and a kindred steadiness of purpose to that of the first President whose name and flag we bear.

So by Thy grace may we be worthy of that special place given to a capital city in Thy holy Name.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
FLORIDA

Place of rest, place of work;
Place of water upon the land
And land upon the water;
Place of straight horizon

edged in green upon the strand;
Laughing birds, bright-hued fish;
Store of fruit and fatling calves,
and sun-warmed rows of vegetables.

May God's bright grace be given thee, that all who dwell on Florida's happy peninsula may be secure in her bounty, and forget not to keep clear those sweet channels where Thy spirit moves and the living water softly flows;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
GEORGIA

Cherish, Lord, the hardy spirit of Thy servants whose lives are rooted in the tawny earth of Georgia. Nurture in them the precious fibre of freedom wrested by their fathers from the upland clearings and workworn fields. Visit now upon the sons, in their towns and cities and burgeoning affairs, such fresh vision of Thy destiny that they may ever be knit together in fruitful life and liberty, planting deep the seed of courage by their abounding streams, and winning Thy blessing upon the goodly land;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
HAWAII

PRAISE be to Thee, O God:

For mighty fire deep in earth
lifting up the isles from ocean floor;
for steady wind wafting seed to the shore;
and rain to bless her mantle of green
and fill the cisterns of life.

Thanks be to Thee, O Father: For all men who have travelled here, bearing in every race Thy image upon their brows; for the sea-girt commonwealth which they fashioned of courage and forbearance and the imagination of peace.

May the fire of Thy Holy Spirit ever burn in the hearts of Thy people, and Thy benediction be the lively hope of all who dwell in Hawaii;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
IDAHO

GREAT FATHER, by whose timeless love the ages are adorned, we thank Thee for Thy splendor strewn upon earth, and deeded free to all who seek Thy glory in the fresh land of Idaho.

From the peaked wall towering by the sunrise to the winding shadows of the mighty gorge to the West, Thou hast bounded her sundry treasure with light. Bless, Lord, the settled valleys and the wild places in between; that the lives of Thy people may be suffused by Thy radiance from on high;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
ILLINOIS

O GOD, forasmuch as many have sought their destiny upon the level soil of Illinois, grant that they may be ever nourished by Thy good Spirit. Let the skein of commerce cast upon the prairie yield its fruitfulness as openly and equally as Thy blessing upon the seed and sowers of this uncommon land. And if the winds blow cold or very hot, then from that seasoning do Thou sift out the souls of great leaders, whose gifts of conscience and unbroken vision may serve Thy cause in the emancipation of all;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
INDIANA

FORASMUCH, O God, as in open Indiana Thou hast matched the boundless sky upon the wide unfettered earth; allow the spirits of those who dwell there the same unbroken vision. Fruitful hast Thou made her soil; let Thy people's lives be equally endowed. Firm as the limestone undergirding, so may her building be. Thus may Thy benediction come to her learning and her life, and to all whose livelihood is cast inside the Hoosier boundary;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
IOWA

To our hands, Great Pastor of Creation, hast Thou committed the abounding yield of earth; grant that as we receive, so may we share that mantle of brimming nourishment which Thou hast spread upon the breast of the continent. In seeds and sowing, in cooling rain and patient care, in welcome reaping and fallow rest—Thou dost plant Thy goodness.

Give us also gladness in the blessed land of Iowa, cradled in fertility between her river boundaries;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
KANSAS

OPEN sky, open land;
Open face, open heart;
So hast Thou made Kansas
and her children, Lord.

Homesteads for weather,
Hands for work;
Fibre of human souls
Thou hast winnowed on the prairie.

Bless that free soil, O God,
Her hills of flint,
Her miles of wheat,
Her flowers in the sun;
And steady servants of Thine
unswerving truth;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
KENTUCKY

O God, who makest dawn to rise upon the mist and spreadest light in all the world, may we follow where Thy brightness beckons.

As of old Thou didst steady the eye and temper the sinew of those who sought fresh life upon the wooded land, keep now a like daring, an equal courage in our Kentucky homes. Let thy glory summon each new day:

In cabins by the winding brooks;
on fields of blue where horses dance;
among Thy people
in their unformed cities.

Thou who hast blessed our roots in willing earth, illumine too the homestead of the spirit whence shall spring vision of a nobler commonwealth;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
LOUISIANA

Bless, gracious Lord, the bright state of Louisiana; her pine hills and river bluffs, her bayous and coastal plains. In many shades of green does she deck the tawny flood that brings her life.

Praise be to Thee for the churning wheels of ships which have threaded that curling channel, assorted fate upon their sails. Bless in fertile peace the counterpoint of hope that here is planted, farmers to the north and boatmen on their waterways.

May Thy goodness fall upon all the parishes of this delta-land, that her people, following the course of Thy grace may be nourished by Thy love,

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
MAINE

THANK you, God, for the State of Maine, reaching ever for the first light of day. As Thy people wake to the Eastern rays, what chowder of nourishment dost Thou prepare for body and soul: concocted so delectably of pine needles and potatoes, of herring and clams and lobsters in their rocky lairs, of blueberries and new-mown hay and a thousand lakes and little boats brave upon the deep.
Of such blessing did our fathers distill their rugged liberty: Grant us grace to win the same, along the country roads and on the fringed and tasseled coast of our wooded land;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
MARYLAND

BLOW, Lord, Thy clean winds upon the shores and shoals of Maryland. Blow gentle breeze of blessing across the earth, atop her stalwart hills, and over the greening fields. Blow, Holy Spirit, the freshness of liberty through the hearts of Thy people whose domain named for a queen, yet worships the King who is the Father of us all.

So may Thy children catch upon their hopes the breath of glory which Thou doth send to fill the spangled sky, the lofty sails of ships, and faithful lives of men.

Fulfill then, O God, the promise once borne upon the wings of a dove of a land of peace and companionship, and courage enough ever to follow after Thee;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
MASSACHUSETTS

BLESS, O Lord, the fish in the sea, emblems of Thine own Son, and like Him given for the sustenance of life. Bless the crook of sandy cape curving out upon that sea to fold in safety the Pilgrims who crossed the deep for Thy salvation.

Bless the harbors and hills to which they came, who fled starvation or oppression or a mean spirit. Bless, O Heavenly Father, the goodly land that was their refuge; the farms and schools and lofty ships builded there, and the golden dome presiding over the brave heritage of patriot fathers.

Bless the Commonwealth thus established, that her people, daring ever to venture in Thy Name, may not fail to reach the haven of Thy mercy and be renewed in the quest of life;

through Jesus Christ our Savior.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
MICHIGAN

GUARD in beauty, O God, the two great juts of land bowered in the unsalted sea, all garlanded with bays and decked with riches, which we call Michigan. From Royale Isle to Lake St. Clair is Thy bounty strewn, whence man could fashion his livelihood with furs and farms and furnaces.

Consecrate the labor, Lord, and hallow the thoughtful minds that seek to civilize the raw gifts of earth, organizing and refining them to the massive use of mankind. So may industry be yoked to human need, and the great engines of manufacture made to serve the common weal.

In the print of Thy feet, O Father, may then our footsteps be; and if we fit our foot to a wheel, then bless the little chariots of our making, that they may carry us to the wide places of Thy splendor;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
MINNESOTA

O God by whose timeless care earth is furnished, we praise Thee for livelihood and leisure so amply framed in welcome Minnesota.

For sheer delight hast Thou spangled her land with ten thousand mirrors of glory;

For the need of life dost Thou bring forth sturdy grain for the millers' grist, to bind Thy love to our bread;

And if after Thee we would builders be, then thanks for the mountains of iron that we may exchange for sinews of steel.

Where Thou hast gone before, O blessed Father, let us follow after: to the headwaters of Thy mercy and the harbor of Thy might;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
MISSISSIPPI

Hark, O Lord, the whisper of hope upon the fallow land, that they who wait for Thy dawning may rejoice in the freshness of Thy blessing.

Send, God, light upon the level horizon;
Wash, God, the waiting earth with goodness;
Fill, God, the hearts of Thy people with friendship and faith;

That remembered upon the levees, the fields and beaches, and in every town, Thy spirit may preside to the health and peace of the citizenry of Mississippi;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
MISSOURI

GREAT GOD whose plough is weather and whose season is Time itself, we thank Thee for the earth Thou hast fashioned in Missouri:

smoothing the glacial plain with
great blades of ice;
irrigating the land with burnished
streams and
bounding it with Ozark beauty.

When Thou wast ready, Thy spirit stood by the Gate, inviting all mankind to the heart of Thy goodly continent.

Bless us now as we seek to retrace the mighty sweep of Thy making;

possessing our inheritance to
the little step of mules,
or the roar of city wheels;
by the flutter of a steamer
upon the river,
by the sound of sweet blues
upon the lips of a trumpet,
or the cry of some distant
train across the night.

At every turn may we find the door; beyond learning to wisdom; beyond living to Life; beyond receiving to the happier joy of giving. And so, as river threads the prairie, may our hearts be open to Thy truth and blessed independence;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
MONTANA

LORD, this wild and sturdy state we call Montana, let it be Thy place of openness and peace enduring. Lift there man's little spirit to the infinitude of Thy glory, imprinted upon the glaciered peaks, the glistening streams and arid plains of Thy making.

Let herders by their wagons have Thee for company; men lonely in the mines, and ranchers at their corrals know Thy boundless presence. Forfend that townsmen should be sheltered from the neigh of horses, the coyote's cry, or the silent respect of furry neighbors; but grant that they, rejoicing in Thy creation, may ever reflect in their own affairs the freedom by which Thou hast surrounded them;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
NEBRASKA

O God, whose splendor unfettered, whose mercy unbounded rests upon the wide plain of Nebraska, let the soul of Thy people be open too. May they hark Thy call gently upon the wind, poignant as a whistle cry haunting the prairie night.

Nurture, Lord, the great course of flat water which once bore the questing pioneer across our nation's heart, and now dispenses life to the fields of corn and farmers' homes.

So may blessing come, O Father, to children schooled to Thy glory, whose eyes shall reflect the distant hills of faith;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
NEVADA

Thou Lord who pleased to pierce the sky and furrow earth in such wild abandon, give Thy servants to endure the pursuit of Thy glory, which Thou hast tumbled upon the untamed vastness of Nevada.

Bless the liveliness of water stored upon her snow-clad slopes, and melted in her shining reservoirs. Bless the veins of treasure girt within her rocky soil. Bless Thy children all, who come seeking peace as a cool draught in a dry land;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
NEW HAMPSHIRE

O GOD, how hast Thou favored Thy children who are given to perceive Thy splendor upon the wooded terrain of New Hampshire!

For hemlock and spruce and sweet maple
dancing down the valleys; for
granite uplifted, unmoved, eternal;
for myriad lakes like eyes
in the forest where shines
the image of the lively sky;
for the silent peace of snow,
the cool verdure of summer,
and autumn's gorgeous praise:
Accept our thanksgiving for
Thy abounding glory.

May our lives too reflect Thy grace: As free as a deer upon the mountain, yet humble enough to seek Thy way and no other. So shall we dwell with Thee and one another, taking the place in Nature's harmony which Thou hast appointed to be our blessing;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
NEW JERSEY

GRANT, gracious Lord, that we may find grace ever to plant gardens alongside the busy marts of commerce;

By the roadside,
a window-box of beauty;
at the door of a city,
a fertile plot of nourishment
and growing things;
by the gate of a nation,
a place of settlement and welcome
and the roots of a new home.

So, O Father, may blessing fall upon Thy people in New Jersey; and upon their coastlands and riverbanks and wooded hills; and upon their souls within. In their sowing let hope be never dim, and in their reaping no defilement, but rather thanksgiving for the bloom of glory which is Thine alone to give;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
NEW MEXICO

MAY glory gild the unspoiled land where Thou dost divide the waters of a continent; where man walks alone by the desert willows or climbs the cool glades of western pine, and ponders Thy blessing measureless and his tiny part in it.

Nourish, God, by Thy silent gift the manhood of Thy people, that they may seek to match Thy splendor with beauty of their own, and braveness and peace. So may our life mingle with Thine beside the turquoise canyons, the tawny mesas and verdant grasslands; and Thy presence abide in the hallowed pueblos of New Mexico;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
NEW YORK

PRAISE be to Thee, O God, for courage to dream and strength to build.

Thanks be to Thee for empires won and kingdoms yet to come; and for lakes and coursing rivers on which has passed the commerce of a continent.

Bless, Lord, these generous valleys and ancient hills; and the harbor at their edge where ocean and earth are married in so great a portal, where ebbs and flows the rhythm of exchange between the Old World and the New.

Grant only, O Father, that those who are posted at such a gate, may match to their tall towers the hope of their spirit; and ever to keep open the sacred path to a country wider than their own;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
NORTH CAROLINA

PRESERVE unto us, good Lord, the precious treasure bequeathed to us by those silent eons when Thou wast preparing earth for our inheritance. May we cherish, and not despoil, the cup of loveliness entrusted to our hands for a space.

So may the green land be blessed, whose smoky highlands yield their mineral riches to the soil below, and whose surf-bound coast is protected by necklaces of sand. Guard the peaceful Sounds; protect the forest mantle, the pliant ploughlands; and let Thy grace abound among Thy Carolina people whose lives are rooted in this place of promise;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
NORTH DAKOTA

WE thank Thee, Lord, for the hard and healthy country of North Dakota, where all is tempered by the sweeping power of Thy creating hand.

By wind Thou dost scour the rocks; by weather etch Thy children's fate: as with tornado or hail, baking sun or driven ice Thou dost chisel the profile of mesa and of man.

Bless then the pliant clay of Thy stout fashioning: the black beds of ancient lakes, little hills left by glaciers, and the untold patience of farmers' lives so humbly bowed to soil and season.

By such winnowing is purest vision born; praise be ever Thine, Creator God, for this open province of Thy cleansing grace;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
OHIO

O God, at whose behest we are given to be weavers at Thy great loom, grant that our labor may be worthy of Thy design. Blessed was the sketch Thou didst imprint upon the land, when hawk and squirrel, whitefish and chestnut tree celebrated together the holy concert of life.

Bless now the human hands that would elaborate Thy plan:

Planting where earth gives promise,
building where water warrants hope,
and combining the bare elements
into countless goods convenient
and useful for our common welfare.

Of many climes is gathered the skein; of many colors the coat is woven; knit all together in honest Ohio, giving purpose in her prosperity and glory to her praise of Thee;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
OKLAHOMA

River Red, and soil, and Indian brother before us: tawny is Thy canvas, Creator God, whereon by touch of light Thou hast daubed the blue-stem grass, rich black earth and white-tailed flash of deer.

Grant that they who sojourn in Oklahoma's land may deserve Thy rainbowed blessing gilding the arch of heaven, and fish below, and every creature in his special mode of life.

Thine the painting, Lord; ours to pursue Thy beauty and truth in the various errands of our common cause;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
OREGON

AUTHOR of all majesty, how bright is Thy glory upon the land of Oregon! Blessed be the trees upon their hills, the valleys in their verdure, and the dry places waiting their turn of fertility.

Praise be to Thee for the precious gift of rain: Drawn into heaven from the sea, caught again upon the snowy peaks, returning fruitfully down the strong rivers giving life to Thy people in their orchards and city places. May their lives be likewise lifted to Thee, and blessed, and sent again to do Thy service upon earth.

So may the land be renewed, and the souls of Thy servants;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
PENNSYLVANIA

BLESS, Lord, the hilly ramparts, the steep valleys and generous plains where by Thy Providence Thou didst settle a sturdy race, destined for freedom. By inwardness of faith, in openness of spirit was the soil prepared, where independence might take root, and liberty baptize a nation fit for the New World. Grant, O Heavenly Father, that they to whom such riches have come down may ever be chosen of Thee to be builders of Thy commonwealth and bearers of Thy peace;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
RHODE ISLAND

PRAISE be to Thee, O God, for the little prism where men have seen the splendor of Thy glory:

In the conscience of a single man who ventured to settle his life under Thy Providence alone;

In the coastal towns where faith was planted in open companionship and none was barred;

By the sparkling bays where spirit grew because there is no limit of Thy love.

Bless, O Lord, the smallest state of our fellowship, that her people may ever nourish the widest of our hopes;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
SOUTH CAROLINA

GRANT, great Creator, that we too may love what Thou hast blessed so well: The Southland soil of Carolina.

Praise Thee, Lord, for the blue of upcountry hills, and their grassy apron falling toward the sea; praise Thee for islands and salt marshes and birds which nest in the sand; praise and thanksgiving for the fruitful earth that cherishes a magnolia or laurel upon the mountain, or cotton for raiment.

Soft is the wind, soft the speech of men, gentle Thy Grace where the roots of Thy children are hid. May they in Thy goodness grow, reaching up their spirits toward heaven, until they shall have fulfilled Thy purpose for them;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
SOUTH DAKOTA

Red man, white man,
Who shall sing for thee
Of the great ocean of grass, thy tawny home?
Of badland draws and lookout hills?
Of coyotes and bison and friendly beasts of the barn?

Hark, O Lord, the night chant of the Sioux,
The rising hymn of settlers hope,
The prayer Thy people make upon the Dakota plain;

That they may grow in peace and goodness
Until Thy praises resound in every heart;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
TENNESSEE

PRAISE be to Thee, Father of myriad waters, for coursing life gushing upon the land of Tennessee:

For prancing freshets reviving
the earth;
For sweet streams to slake
man's thirst;
For swift rivers carving paths
for hunters' feet;
For that majestic tide which
collects them all to make a
highway for the continent.

After Thy leading, clean and cool have Thy people followed, resting only where beaver or man has caused the flood to pause.

Grant to Thy servants in their blessed valleys the spirit still to seek and to find that living water which is the prize of life that is more than mortal;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR

TEXAS

REPUBLIC within a republic, may the Lord endow thy strength with freedom doubly bold: Hallow the proud star of thy destiny; cherish the light of each man's liberty; until the Texas plain be bright with the galaxy of God's blessing. Then by heaven's high design, may her sons dare to choose their way, true to the glory that ever summons them to life;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR

UTAH

O GOD, who day by day doth pierce the desert with the brightness of Thy presence, lead us 'neath the heights and across the great salt flats to the temple of Thy holiness. In storm or danger, in drought or plague, send O Father sweet birds of mercy to keep Thy Utah folk in safety upon the promised land.

Guard the painted cliffs, the vermillion spires and rocky spans; keep too the watered furrows and cleanly streets where springs Thy blessing to our homes in love and hope;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
VERMONT

ABIDE, dear Lord, with the steady folk who choose to dwell in the gentle valleys of Vermont. Thy goodness doth her land proclaim:

by water dancing in her streams,
pure in the ponds;
by the silence of winter cold and
the sweetness of Spring in
the maple sap;
by granite sentinels against the
sky, and the greenness of life
below.

By such blessing surrounded may Thy frugal people, sturdy and free, sanctify their hands for work and their hearts to Thee. First to march for liberty, first to outlaw slavery, first to count the vote of every man: Thou didst teach Thy people well. Guard now their peace, and forever the openness of truth;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
VIRGINIA

RENEW Thy grace, O Thou ruler of destiny, upon the Commonwealth of Virginia, that she may every rejoice in the dominion of Thy Providence. Bless the gracious land where Thou hast unfolded such a measure of Thy purpose for mankind.

For each step on the highway of history we lift our thanksgiving: For those who wrested welcome from the wilderness; who planted peace along the inland avenues of the sea; who saw Thy glory upon the mountain heights and likened it to freedom. Praise be to Thee, mighty Lord, for the sturdy quest which generation by generation sought out the noble mark of independence and distilled that brave wisdom into the instruments of a nation's governance.

Cherish, O Father, that generous spirit which has raised up such leaders of liberty; and sanctify to Thy people still the vision of Thy great design for them and for all men.

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
WASHINGTON

O Thou Creator Divine, who dost fashion our lives by the rhythm of Earth, we thank Thee for that wide span of glory we call Washington.

Hardy the wagons that first came there, and the little ships, which were met by shining salmon striving, upstream leaping that life might be sown abw.

Bless, O God, our struggle too, that fresh bounty may come of our hands and hearts, and goodness like unto Thine.

Then, Lord, after work, in peace let Thy people be. Let them abide as great trees rooted in the embracing soil, their branches spread to heaven's promise.

Thus upon the plains, by ocean's teeming Sound, and 'round the snowy sentinels that guard these timbered hills, may Thy people live enobled by Thy grace.

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
WEST VIRGINIA

Shine, O Lord, upon the homely mosaic of West Virginia's land: Upon her steep-hewn hills and angled draws, her maple-strewn valleys and ridges clad in mountain rhododendron.

Shine, Lord, upon her citizens, armed only with freedom, scrappers all for such measure of dignity as fearlessness and faith may win.

Shine, O God, into those deep recesses where Thou hast hidden abundant riches, that those who dig in the earth, and those who watch for their return, may know the radiance of Thy light and the safety of Thy love.

Bright be the cleansing fire of Thy truth in the hearts of the people, and in the public weal of their common life;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
WISCONSIN

CHERISH, Lord, by Thy steady grace, the State of Wisconsin; her trim and serried fields, her frost-scoured shores, the lively marts of her trade.

Fresh springs her teeming life; clear and clean may its coursing be; in government, in learning and sport and in the heart of every citizen.

Where once trees grew in quiet grace upon the rolling land, now let Thy children stand, blessed in their kith and their kine; peaceful by their barns, and eager still for the day Thou hast in store for them;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A PRAYER FOR
WYOMING

GUIDE, O Lord, the feet that seek to follow in the trail of Thy bright passing: on burnished peaks of light, or scoured beds of rushing water, and quietly by the sheltering folds of sheep. In wide places and in small, haste Thy blessing upon the Wyoming land, that her people Faithful be, their lives attuned to Thy gracious splendor upon the buttes and grassy pasture, the wooded home of elk or bear, and the hearths of human friendship at the ending of the trail;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

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